Paths to Republics

How two independence struggles drew on the American example

6.C.5.1.D "Describe how historic struggles for independence in Latin America and the Caribbean were influenced by the American revolution and Constitution, leading to the creation of modern republics."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two ways the American example influenced independence or government in another country, then circle one way a new country chose its own path.

Independence, Then What?

1 In 1776, thirteen British colonies declared independence and fought to form the United States. Their victory showed people in colonies that European rule could be challenged. In 1787, the country wrote a Constitution that set rules for its republic. In a republic, eligible voters choose representatives to make government decisions. The Constitution also divided power among branches. News of the American Revolution and this plan for government traveled south. People in Latin America and the Caribbean could study these examples as they argued over independence and what kind of government should come next.

2 On the Caribbean island of Hispaniola, people in the French colony of Saint-Domingue faced harsh slavery and unequal laws. Beginning in 1791, enslaved people and their allies fought for freedom. The American Revolution had shown that a colony could defeat a European power, while the French Revolution spread calls for equality. Haiti won independence from France in 1804 and later became a republic. Haitian leaders rejected slavery, which still existed in the United States. They used the idea of self-government but chose a different path toward freedom.

3 In Mexico, fighting for independence from Spain began in 1810. Mexico gained independence in 1821, but its first national government was an empire, not a republic. After the empire fell, leaders wrote a constitution in 1824 and formed a federal republic. Like the U.S. Constitution, Mexico's constitution divided power between a national government and states. Mexican leaders did not simply copy the United States: Mexico had its own history, needs, and debates. The move from empire to republic shows how the American example could influence a new country without deciding its future for it.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How could the United States' victory influence people in other colonies who wanted independence?

2. How did Haiti follow the American example, and how did it choose a different path?

3. How did the U.S. Constitution influence Mexico's government after the empire fell?

4. Why does Mexico's first government show that winning independence did not automatically create a republic?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine an island colony wins independence and must choose a government. Write three sentences explaining how the American Revolution and U.S. Constitution could influence its path to a republic, and one choice its leaders could make differently.

ANSWER KEY

Paths to Republics

GRADE 6 · 6.C.5.1.D

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two ways the American example influenced independence or government in another country, then circle one way a new country chose its own path. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How could the United States' victory influence people in other colonies who wanted independence?	**It showed that a colony could challenge and defeat a European power.**
2	How did Haiti follow the American example, and how did it choose a different path?	**Haiti fought for independence and later became a republic. Unlike the United States at that time, Haiti rejected slavery.**
3	How did the U.S. Constitution influence Mexico's government after the empire fell?	**Mexico formed a federal republic whose constitution divided power between a national government and states, as the U.S. Constitution did.**
4	Why does Mexico's first government show that winning independence did not automatically create a republic?	**Mexico first became an empire. It formed a republic only after the empire fell and leaders wrote a new constitution.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The American Revolution could show the island's people that a colony can break from European rule. After winning independence, they could use the U.S. Constitution as a model for a republic with elected representatives and separate branches. They could also reject slavery, choosing a path different from the early United States.

Accept other passage-supported explanations of how independence or constitutional ideas spread. For Your Turn, the different choice must be historically plausible and clearly distinguished from the early United States.